

# PEOPLE & THINGS By ATTICUS

**T**HERE is no established technique for success. Genius takes many forms and therefore when we sit down to study the career of an eminent man we have to bring to the task a virginity of approach. All this is a prelude to the fact that Mr. Leslie Gamage, at the age of seventy and without a grey hair in his head, has been appointed chairman of the General Electric Company.

This is a success story which breaks all the rules. Instead of a barefoot boy climbing the ladder from the first rung, our hero was educated at Marlborough and was senior scholar of Exeter College, Oxford. In 1913 he took honours in the Solicitors' Final Examination and a year later, like all his generation, faced the call of battle. He was wounded during the Battle of the Somme in 1916, when he won the Military Cross, and again in 1918 when he was taken prisoner. On his return to London he married Muriel, elder daughter of the late Lord Hirst, chairman of the General Electric Company.

## Working Model

Mr. Gamage joined the company in 1919 as assistant secretary, and by 1925 was elected to the board and assumed responsibility for the company's export business.

Working to his philosophy of example and industry he starts for his office every day strictly at 8.30 a.m. In the last war Mr. Gamage enlisted with the corps of firewatchers and claims that he learned more about humanity than he would have done at a hundred company meetings in the City.

What is the secret of his success? He has gusto, a sense of fun and even more than a sense of adventure; a

wife who is possibly the most assiduous charity worker in London, although she will not lend her name to any charity "unless I can really contribute and help." For more than twenty years she was a governor of the Infant Hospital, Westminster (now the Westminster Children's Hospital).

This is a story of a man seventy years young, who is taking on an enormous new task for the simple reason that he is a builder and is not content to sit by the fireside and watch the years go by.

## Logic Versus Tradition

**P**RESUMABLY there will be a diligent search of the premises before Parliament opens on November 5. They still explore the crypt to make sure that Guy Fawkes has no successor.

The television triumph of the Queen in North America naturally awakened a demand for the televising of the State Opening at Westminster. It is understandable that our legislators do not want to drag tradition down to the level of entertainment but logic is on the side of the modernists.

There is no deep distinction between the crowds waiting outside the Houses of Parliament to watch the arrival of the Queen and the millions who would be watching it on the television screen. Then why not carry it a few steps further and let the people watch the Opening of Parliament and actually see the Queen take her seat on the Throne?

By age-honoured custom the Queen sends her messenger to the Commons to attend the Opening and the door is slammed in his face. Then when courtesy is restored the Commons march to the Upper

House headed by Mr. Speaker and the party leaders followed by the motley collection of M.P.s with little hope of finding space to see or hear.

It is a far more picturesque ceremony than that in the Canadian Parliament.

## Post Mortem

**H**AVING championed the intrusion of TV in the Opening of Parliament I must now raise a matter of taste which concerns this overpowering new medium. Hardly had we read in the newspapers of the sudden death of Christian Dior when he appeared on our television screen in complete health and full of that curious rustic charm which made him seem so unlike a dictator of feminine fashion.

There was something basically offensive about the interview. Perhaps there was a ghoulish fascination for some people in listening to a man whose body was awaiting burial.

In the words he spoke there was perhaps his true epitaph. "My happiest hours," he said, "were when I got away to the country and joined my friends in good companionship." Any one who ever attended an opening show in his Paris salon could well believe it.

## Golden Wedding

**M**Y warm congratulations to Mr. Christopher Hoare, head of the City stockbroking firm, who celebrated his golden wedding anniversary on Friday



The golden wedding portrait of Mr. Christopher Hoare.

There was a banquet for his eleven partners on Thursday night and a family party in the country yesterday.

To mark the occasion his partners and staff have had the portrait done of him which I illustrate here. It now hangs in his office, and a copy has been presented to his wife. It is the work of Major Davidson-Houston, who began to paint after his capture by the Germans at Dunkirk. I think he has caught the craggy humour in his subject's face superbly.

It was in the spring of 1905 that "Kit" Hoare, just down from Cambridge, first took his seat at a clerk's stool in Lloyds Bank, in Morpeth. In 1906 he came to the City and in 1910 joined the broking firm of Cohen Laming (which now bears his own name), to find that he had been thrown in at the deep end with a vengeance. Neither Cohen nor Laming spent more than five months of the year in the office. The only telephone available to him was in a box across a landing outside the office, and all contracts were written out in copperplate.

Mr. Hoare gave up hunting a mere two years ago, and still enjoys shooting and golf. So I was not surprised to hear through a City friend that he has no intention of retiring—"though my partners are longing for it." I wonder!

## Churchill as Critic

**S**IR WINSTON CHURCHILL has never pretended to be a highbrow, nor has he had

time in his crowded life to spend many hours in the theatre although his own life has been packed with drama. It was in keeping with his own tradition that in search of entertainment he recently attended a performance of Agatha Christie's thick-ear success "Mousetrap" which has been running for years in the West End.

Some years ago he went to see the play "St. Helena," written by that charming and gifted Jeanne de Casals with R. C. Sherriff as co-author. After the play had ended a journalist asked Mr. Churchill, as he was then, for his opinion of the play. Full of enthusiasm the great man poured out laudatory comment which duly appeared in the Press and did much good to the run of the play.

Mr. Churchill was much disturbed by this, not that the reporter had mis-quoted him but because he felt that he was too infrequent a theatregoer to have any right to express public opinion on a play.

## A Brick Is Dropped

Two or three years ago a political friend of Churchill advised him to see Richard Burton playing Coriolanus at the Old Vic. "Shakespeare foresaw you," he said; "It is really the story of your life."

A few days later Churchill met his friend and observed grimly: "I cannot see any possible parallel between the life of Coriolanus and myself." The unfortunate fellow argued that Coriolanus saved Rome, just as Churchill saved Britain, and when the war was over the Romans threw out Coriolanus just as the British voters rejected Churchill. "Yes," said Churchill darkly, "but I did not cross over and join the enemy."

## Light Airs

**E**VERY now and then a personality passes from the scene and we have a feeling that something gentle and warm has gone from our lives. Such a man was Jack Buchanan, who never seemed to have been young and yet never gave even the suggestion that he had grown old. His soft voice with its strictly limited range maintained its caressing quality to the end, and the soft patter of his feet never quickened nor tired.

Not even his friends could imagine him with any head-gear other than his shining but never shiny top hat. One felt that at night he placed the hat on a table near his bed guarded by the spotless pair of gloves, much as a knight of old left his helmet and sword. When Buchanan sang it was with an air of apology that disarmed our critical faculty. He was a troubadour who danced beneath his lady's balcony because his voice would not carry that high.

## People and Words

When there is something special to be done, like inventing the steam engine, or founding a new dynasty, or winning the Battle of Waterloo, the English are as likely as not to turn to a Scot, a Welshman, or an Irishman.—THE PRIME MINISTER.

People seem to believe that sending for a solicitor to make their will is only one short step from sending for the undertaker.

—MRS. VASSY.

We are an island people. We fight our wars in other countries—and we prefer it that way.—FIELD MARSHAL VISCOUNT MONTGOMERY.

Inflation is like taking alcohol, stimulating while you are having it and fun as long as you can get another drink. But in the end you have to face the hangover.

—MR. ROBERT CARL, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Labour.

I am not capable of making the sound known as a wolf-whistle.

—SIR JOHN WOLFENDEN.